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LOG OF MEETING

DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES CPSC/OFFICE OF  
THE SECRETARY

SUBJECT: Riding Mowers

1999 JUL 27 P 12:43

DATE OF MEETING: March 3, 1999

PLACE: Hyatt Hotel, Sarasota, FL

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Roy W. Deppa *RW1*

COMMISSION ATTENDEES: Roy W. Deppa, Division of Mechanical Engineering

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Members of the Riding Mower Working Group  
See attached attendance list

SUMMARY:

The meeting had been requested by Roy Deppa to discuss the status of reverse mowing controls on ride-on mowers. Following introductions, Mr. Deppa briefly described CPSC's continued concern about runover and backover incidents involving young children. Additionally, the request for funding prepared by Harborview Injury Prevention Center has been turned down, but Harborview will continue to seek funding, and the American Academy of Pediatrics is preparing an updated statement on lawnmower injuries to children.

Gunter Plamper, MTD, provided a description of that company's experience with full no-mow-in-reverse since 1982. Their control shuts off the engine or disengages the electric clutch if the operator tries to shift into reverse while the pto is engaged. Because MTD recognizes that some owners will disable the device, the circuitry is designed such that disconnecting the no-mow feature does not affect the other safety circuits (operator presence control, starting interlock, key switch) on the mower. MTD believes that there is greater acceptance of the no-mow-in-reverse feature now than there was initially, in part because of consumers' increased safety awareness.

Denis Del Ponte described John Deere's Reverse Implement Option (RIO), which is now on all B71.1 certified equipment. This control allows the operator to override the reverse pto cutout, in part because other implements may be driven from the pto which may require the machine to operate while in reverse. To use the pto and reverse simultaneously, the operator places the pto control knob, located on the dashboard, in a position which allows this. If this position has not been selected and the operator shifts into reverse with the pto engaged, the engine will stop (if manual clutch) or the clutch will disengage the pto. To use the pto in reverse on mowers that have a foot-

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operated directional control, the operator must first press a button while engaging reverse.

Deere advises consumers to "never mow in reverse". They also provide a video with each machine to demonstrate how the system works.

Jim Fear, Toro, described the key-choice safety system which allows the operator to mow or operate other attachments in reverse if they choose. Unless this system is activated, the mower will not mow in reverse. To override the no-mow-in-reverse mechanism, the operator turns a key located on the seat pedestal. The system remains activated as long as the mower is in use. Upon disengaging the mower control, the system reverts to no-mow-in-reverse.

Toro believes that providing a carefully-designed option that allows the user to override the "no-mow-in-reverse" feature under controlled conditions is preferable to having some users defeat the device permanently. There is a label at the switch that says "never mow in reverse if there is any possibility of children appearing in the mowing area". The owner's manual has a 1-1/2 page description of the operation of the feature.

Mr. Deppa requested that the RMWG recognize that the recent adoption of reverse mowing controls by Deere and Toro, and the potential for other companies to offer related controls suggests a need for some form of recognition in the voluntary standard. There was some discussion of this comment, including statements that it is too early to specify operational or performance requirements. Mr. Deppa stated that CPSC recognizes this, but that some aspects of these controls probably can be standardized from the outset, such as terminology, labeling, control activation direction, or the default condition of such controls.

Martin Berk pointed out that OPEI and various manufacturers send letters of protest to newspapers that show pictures of people giving rides to children while mowing, or other unsafe practices. Such photo are commonplace human interest items in the summer. Mr. Berk requested that CPSC actively respond to such news items as well to help convey the message of the hazard this poses to small children. Mr. Deppa responded positively to this, and said that he would convey the message to CPSC. Mr. Berk said he would forward examples of this kind of news clipping to Mr. Deppa.

## ATTENDANCE

MEETING OF Riding Mower Working Group

DATE 3/3/99

LOCATION Hyatt Sarasota, Sarasota, Fla.

	<u>NAME OF PARTICIPANT</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
1.	John Liskey	OPEI
2.	MARTIN BERIK	
3.	DEXIS DEL PONTE	DEERE & CO.
4.	DICK DE PAUW	DEERE & CO.
5.	Ted Weizel	Delta Systems Inc.
6.	GÜNTER PLAMPER	MTD PRODUCTS INC.
7.	CLIFF BOYLSTON	DELTA SYSTEMS INC.
8.	GELLY COONS	F. H. P.
9.	TOM WISE	SIMPSON
10.	Don Crosby	Dixon Industries
11.	Drew Byers	The Toro Co.
12.	Jim Fear	TORO
13.	Bela Csonka	Ariens
14.	Brian Doklout	Honda
15.	DOUG RIEI	TECUMSEH
16.	BRUCE MAYEDA.	KUBOTA
17.	DAN HERGATT.	F. H. P.
18.	Roy Deppa	CPSC
19.		
20.		